

Providing a Positive Healthcare Experience
In a Healing Environment



2011 annual report



VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System



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Director



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Chief of Staff



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Associate Director
Nursing & Patient Care Services



David L. Holt, MBA, FACHE
Associate Director
Ambulatory Care & Facility Services



Carrie J. Dekorte, Pharm.D., FACHE
Associate Director
Administration & Operations

■ A Message from the Director

WE EXPERIENCED ANOTHER PRODUCTIVE YEAR FOR GLA WITH MANY SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES, AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

Probably the most noteworthy accomplishment was the approval of our GLA Master Plan after ten years in the making. This plan enables proper planning for future use of the property in accordance with the plan's guiding principles.

Another major success story is the outstanding work pertaining to homeless programs for Veterans. We have over 250 staff working on homeless programs. We will continue our work to end Veteran homelessness by expanding our homeless programs and increasing the number of "street medicine" teams.

In terms of our goal to be more "green", we continued our initiatives to implement solar panels at WLA, Sepulveda, and LAACC. When completed, the eco-friendly panels will save GLA an estimated \$2.5 million per year.

We are also very proud of GLA's selection as a VHA National Center of Innovation for patient-centered care (PCC). This designation involves GLA piloting PCC initiatives for future implementation in other VA's across the country. Leading GLA's innovations is the scheduled stand-up of VA's first Integrative Health and Healing Center.

Another exciting transformational initiative is the implementation of New Models of Care. This encompasses: Patient Aligned Care Teams where the patient is at the center of the medical team with a personalized health plan and health coaching; integrating mental health into primary care; and leveraging technology via virtual care modalities such as home telehealth, e-consults, and secure messaging.

We are also working on implementing a surgery robotics program, expanding telehealth medicine to reduce patient travel, enhancing social media, creating a new employee wellness program, designing our new bed tower, and starting construction of building 209 to provide supportive housing for homeless Veterans.

At GLA we are dedicated to our core values: integrity, commitment, advocacy, respect, and excellence. We continue to provide the highest standards of health care, research, innovations, and customer service. We are privileged to serve America's Veterans! We thank our community members, neighbors, VSOs, our partners in government including, local, state, and federal, and our stakeholders. We value your ongoing steadfastness and support. As always, our success is measured by your satisfaction, and our commitment is leading excellence in health care in the 21st century.

Sincerely,

Donna Beiter

Director, VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System
VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network



■ Awards and Recognition

2011

DONNA BEITER received an Honorary Doctrine of Humane Letters from her Alma Mater, D'Youville College in Buffalo, New York.

Congratulations to **JILL REDGATE**, an inpatient Registered Dietitian, for winning the American Dietetic Association Recognized Young Dietitian of the Year Award.

NURSING RESEARCH/EDUCATION received a \$5,000 public health grant for the past three years to continue the work on Environmental Tobacco Smoke AKA second hand smoke.

STEPHANIE ARNOLD, MSN, RN-BC, was recognized by the UCLA School of Nursing for her service in the mental health clinical education of pre-licensure undergraduate BSN and graduate MECN nursing students.

SEYMOUR BLOOM was a candidate for VA National Volunteer of the Year. Bloom, who came in third, was selected as a candidate by the Jewish War Veteran national Veteran Service Organization.

The William E. Simon Olympic Endowment for the Support of Athletes awarded to our very own **DAPHNE WRIGHT**, Olympic and ParaOlympic hopeful.

Congrats **PETE HOWENSTEIN** for receiving the Legion Award. Pete is a long-term volunteer at SACC. His decorations include: Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

GLA won an Aster excellence medical award for the Patient Welcome Bag project. The award was presented to GLA for their marketing efforts.

The California Legislature 39th Assembly District honored **ALLEN MACON** as the 2011 Veteran of the Year.

RASHAYE FREEMAN, NP, Diabetes Education Program Manager, received the 2011 Nurse Week Nursing Excellence Awards, California Regional level, at the annual awards ceremony.

Our long-term volunteer, **HY ARNESTY** (American Legion, JVV) was named Veteran of the Year for 2011 by the Los Angeles County Veterans Advisory Board.

GLA Neurologist, **DR. ERIC CHENG** mentioned in the magazine American Academy of Neurologist for his work in quality measures for epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, and dementia.

DR. JENNIFER MARTIN won the VHA Merit Review Award for a study in implementing cognitive behavioral therapy for female Veterans with insomnia.

GLA's Office of Nursing Service received an honorable mention innovation award for a project called 'Somewhere over the Rainbow' which is integrating novice nurses into clinical nurse leader roles.

DR. JEROME HERSHMAN received the Distinguished Alumnus award at the University of Illinois, College of Medicine.

GLA's Web Team received a VHA Communications award for the Old Soldier's Home chapel website.

USC's School of Pharmacy named **PATRICK SHIN** Resident of the Year.

VA Under Secretary's Health Services Research award was presented to **DR. PAUL SHEKELLE** for his research on clinical topics that influenced how VA develops, monitors, and updates practices guidelines.

DR. JEROME SIEGEL received the William S. Middleton Award, VA's most prestigious award in Biomedical Laboratory Research and Development for studies in sleep physiology.

GLA Receives the Institute for Medical Quality/California Medical Association Cultural & Linguistic Competency Award for Advancement in Integrating Cultural and Linguistic Competency.

■ VHA Mission

Honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

■ VHA Vision

VHA will continue to be the benchmark of excellence and value in health care and benefits by providing exemplary services that are both patient-centered and evidence-based.

This care will be delivered by engaged, collaborative teams in an integrated environment that supports learning, discovery and continuous improvement.

It will emphasize prevention and population health and contribute to the Nation's well-being through education, research and service in national emergencies.

Integrity

Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.

■ The Robotic Surgical Device

GLA PURCHASED THE INTUITIVE SURGICAL DA VINCI ROBOTIC DEVICE allowing surgeons to operate through tiny incisions by manipulating the robotic arms from a console in the operating room. This technique results in less blood loss, decreased post-operative pain, and shorter hospital stays for patients.

■ Single Balloon Enteroscope System

THE AMERICAN LEGION Palisades Post 283 donated approximately \$100,000 for the purchase of a Single

Balloon Enteroscope System. This system is used for gastroenterology procedures and advances our ability to diagnose and treat complex medical patients in gastrointestinal problems well beyond the limitations of current standard endoscopes.

■ Ramping up Social Media

GLA HAS RAMPED up its social media efforts in 2011 increasing our engagement with Veterans, their families, and the community. According to a recent social media report by VHA web communications, GLA's Facebook page is ranked number one out of VA five medical centers within VISN22. Nationally, GLA stands proudly at the 20th spot among 134 VA medical centers with over 877 'likes'.

WE HOSTED our first Twitter parties covering topics such as: immunizations, women's health, and safety. Twitter Grader has given our Twitter account an 87%. Engaging with Veterans on social media sites has allowed us to further our communication efforts.

\$770,242,778

Total Fiscal Year Budget

\$610,224,718
MEDICAL

\$82,216,616
FACILITIES

\$571,293,378
ADMINISTRATION

\$20,672,066
NRM

Commitment

Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.

■ Working to End Homelessness among Veterans by 2015

GLA DEDICATED \$38.1 million in resources for staffing, equipment and contracts including \$13.6 million in rental subsidies to provide transitional housing through The Department of Housing and Urban Development and VA Supporting Housing (HUD/VASH).

GLA PROVIDED SERVICES to over 9,000 homeless Veterans. Services include housing, medical care, mental health treatment, substance use disorder treatment, and vocational rehabilitation.

OUR VA GRANT AND PER DIEM TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM now has over 1,300 beds; a 6 percent increase from the previous year.

GLA'S SCREENING CLINIC, the "gateway" to services and programs for Veterans who are homeless, increased their intake from 40 to 80-100 Veterans a day.

WE STARTED VETERANS COURT in LA and Ventura County to help Veterans divert away from incarceration into a VA residential treatment program.

WE IMPLEMENTED "Project 60", a collaborative effort with federal, county, local government, and non-profit agencies to move 60 of the most vulnerable and chronically homeless Veterans off the streets and into permanent supportive housing using a 'housing first' approach.

WE INTRODUCED the recreational therapy of dragon boat paddling to Veterans touched by homelessness to promote team building and camaraderie.

■ Continual Training

GLA HAS THE LARGEST graduate medical education program in the VA system and is the only medical center to sponsor its own free-standing medical residencies.

WE PROVIDED clinical training for medical residents in 55 Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education approved medical residency programs from three major academic affiliates including UCLA, USC, and Cedars-Sinai.

GLA ALSO SERVES as a clinical training site for hundreds of associated health trainees in nursing, dentistry, pharmacy, social work, and psychology. In addition to training future health professionals, the education mission assures a competent workforce through continual training of GLA's staff through planned and directed educational activities.

■ Dedicated to Veteran Families

GLA'S CAREGIVER PROGRAM assisted over 250 families, linking them to caregiver support, valuable information, and resources. In addition, 25 families of Veterans received over \$150,000 in stipends.

Advocacy

Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.

■ Patient-Centered Care Initiatives to Support Veterans and Enhance Their Overall Health Care Experience and Recovery

CREATED AND DISTRIBUTED 100,000 building and site rendition maps of West LA, Downtown Los Angeles, and the Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center to Veterans, stakeholders, and staff. Insightful way finding visitor guides offer easy-to-read texts and visuals helping Veterans familiarize themselves with GLA facilities.

AS ONE OF FIVE VHA DESIGNATED CENTERS OF INNOVATION, we continued the PCC journey through implementation of "Healing Programs and Healing Spaces" for staff, Veterans, and families. Staff studied, practiced, and taught healing techniques such as tai chi, yoga, breathing-stretching-relaxation, and mindful-based stress reduction to Veterans.

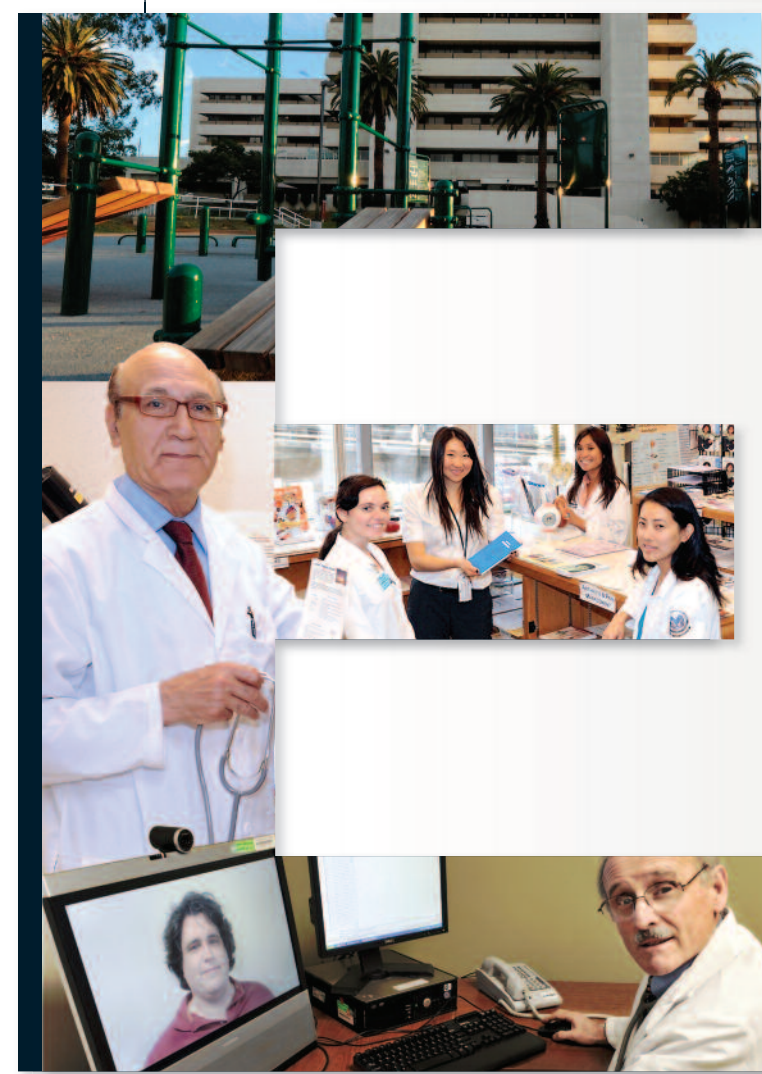
GLA'S HEALING SPACES includes the opening of a Rose Garden, also known as the Historic Women

Veterans Rose Garden and 46 newly renovated waiting areas designed with earth tone colors, scenic artwork, and wood-based furnishings. We replaced overhead fluorescent lighting with images of clouds placed on light box inserts to promote calmness and serenity. We also renovated our patient rehabilitation apartment and dining room to include bathrooms, cabinets, closets, a flat screen TV and therapeutic activities such as Nintendo Wii games.

■ Promoting Veterans Participation

WE HAVE THREE ACTIVE PATIENT ADVISORY COUNCILS at West LA, downtown Los Angeles, and Sepulveda clinics where the voice of the Veteran is heard loud and clear. The council, consisting of Veterans, Veteran Service Organizations and Voluntary Service developed a new patient orientation program to provide assistances for new patients.

CONDUCTED QUARTERLY stakeholders meetings tailored for Veterans and Veteran Service Organization to address their specific questions regarding patient health care. In addition, GLA hosted a stakeholders meeting in the San Fernando Valley to encourage more Veterans and local community representatives in that area to participate and attend meetings.



Excellence

Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

■ Construction Projects

SOLAR PANELS were installed at WLA and SACC. By 2012, LAACC will have some resting on their roof producing energy and saving GLA money.

THIS YEAR we opened the WLA polytrauma pad which allows Veterans to exercise outdoors.

IN WLA'S MAIN HOSPITAL FACILITY, the ambulatory care clinic, urology clinic, and cardiac catheterization lab received a face-lift including new terrazzo flooring on the first floor. In addition, WLA's nursing home in buildings 213 and 215 also received updated interiors.

■ Expanding Research

WE CURRENTLY have four active VA Cooperative Studies ongoing. These multi-VA center clinical trials are influential in determining best practices in diagnosing and treating many common diseases faced both by Veterans and the public.

TWO OF OUR RESEARCHERS received some of VA's most prestigious research awards; Paul Shekelle, MD, PhD was awarded the Undersecretary's Award for Excellence in Health Services Research (the highest award VA gives for Health Services Research) and Jerome Siegel, PhD was awarded the William S. Middleton Award (highest award VA gives for Biomedical Research).

ADDITIONALLY, GLA has eight VA Research Career Scientists or Senior Research Career Scientists which are highly competitive awards given to established non-clinician researchers in VA. GLA also has five active VA Career Development Awardees which are also highly competitive mentored awards for young investigators.

■ Using Telehealth to Treat Patients and to Provide More Timely Access to Care

GLA BECAME ONE of the first five VA SCAN (Specialty Care Access Network) regional centers in the nation. SCAN's goal is to build CBOC primary care providers' (PCPs) capacity to provide complex care to patient's onsite.

SCAN USES clinical video-teleconferencing to enable providers to consult with additional specialists using a "hub and spoke" model. In 2011, GLA SCAN program launched a pain management SCAN clinic and laid foundation for fiscal year 2012 expansion to SCAN clinics in women's health and chronic kidney disease.

IN OTHER TELEHEALTH activities, GLA has increased enrollment in the home telehealth program by 28% reducing patient travel. In 2011, GLA's telehealth program made a major investment in the future expansion of its services adding thirteen technical support staff and \$1.3 million in equipment. More is on the way!



Respect

Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.

■ Reducing Wait Times at the Business Office

GLA HAS 3,730 VETERANS ENROLLED in the Electronically Fund Transfer program (EFT) reducing wait times for travel claim benefits at both the business and agent cashier office. Veterans can now complete a pre-printed form, drop it off at the business office and proceed to their GLA appointments without delay.

BUSINESS OFFICE received access to the Financial Services Center Station-Inquiry-System making the process easier and faster for Veterans to receive information about their EFT deposit queries.

■ Enhanced Health Care Options for our Female Veterans

DEVELOPED AND DESIGNED new programs to address the unique needs of our female Veterans, we listened to their input and as a result designed programs to fit their needs.

AT SACC we hosted our first women's Veterans all day wellness conference. We shared medicine and wellness techniques with over 50 female Veterans and taught them how to meditate, tai chi, and we held a healthy cooking demonstration.

WE EXPANDED our services to our female Veterans in San Luis Obispo and Santa Maria clinics by increasing our cadre of designated women primary care providers.

WLA AND SACC developed a Managing Over-weight/Obesity for Veterans Everywhere (MOVE) health and wellness program exclusively for females. Women now have a greater tendency to complete the program with the modifications.

■ Valuing Healthier Bodies with Improved Nutrition and Food Services (NFS)

GLA IMPLEMENTED VHA's healthy diet guidelines for inpatients providing healthier menu items

higher in fiber, fruits, veggies, and lower in red meats. In addition, patients are now provided flexible and variable nourishment selections so patients have more food choices. Patient satisfaction scores for NFS averaged 4.72 out of 5 points; above the VISN and national average.

EXPANDED THE MOVE program to CBOC's in Oxnard and San Luis Obispo to reach Veterans in rural areas.

\$43,703,392

Total Research Funding

718
ACTIVE
RESEARCH
PROJECTS

■ GLA FACILITIES

West Los Angeles
Medical Center
310-478-3711

Sepulveda Ambulatory
Care Center
818-891-7711

Los Angeles Ambulatory
Care Center
213-253-2677

Santa Maria CBOC
805-354-6000

Bakersfield CBOC
661-632-1800

East Los Angeles CBOC
323-725-7557

Gardena CBOC
310-851-4705

Lancaster CBOC
661-729-8655

Oxnard CBOC
805-604-6960

San Luis Obispo CBOC
805-543-1233

Santa Barbara CBOC
805-683-1491

■ VET CENTERS

East Los Angeles
323-728-9966

Culver City
310-641-0326

Gardena
310-767-1221

Sepulveda
818-892-9227

Ventura
805-585-1860

